

Addressing Bullying in Schools: An Introduction to the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

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Solutions
to the Dropout Crisis

Three Components of Bullying

- Is aggressive behavior that intends to cause harm or distress.
- Usually is repeated over time.
- Occurs in a relationship where there is an imbalance of power or strength.



What Is/Isn't Bullying?

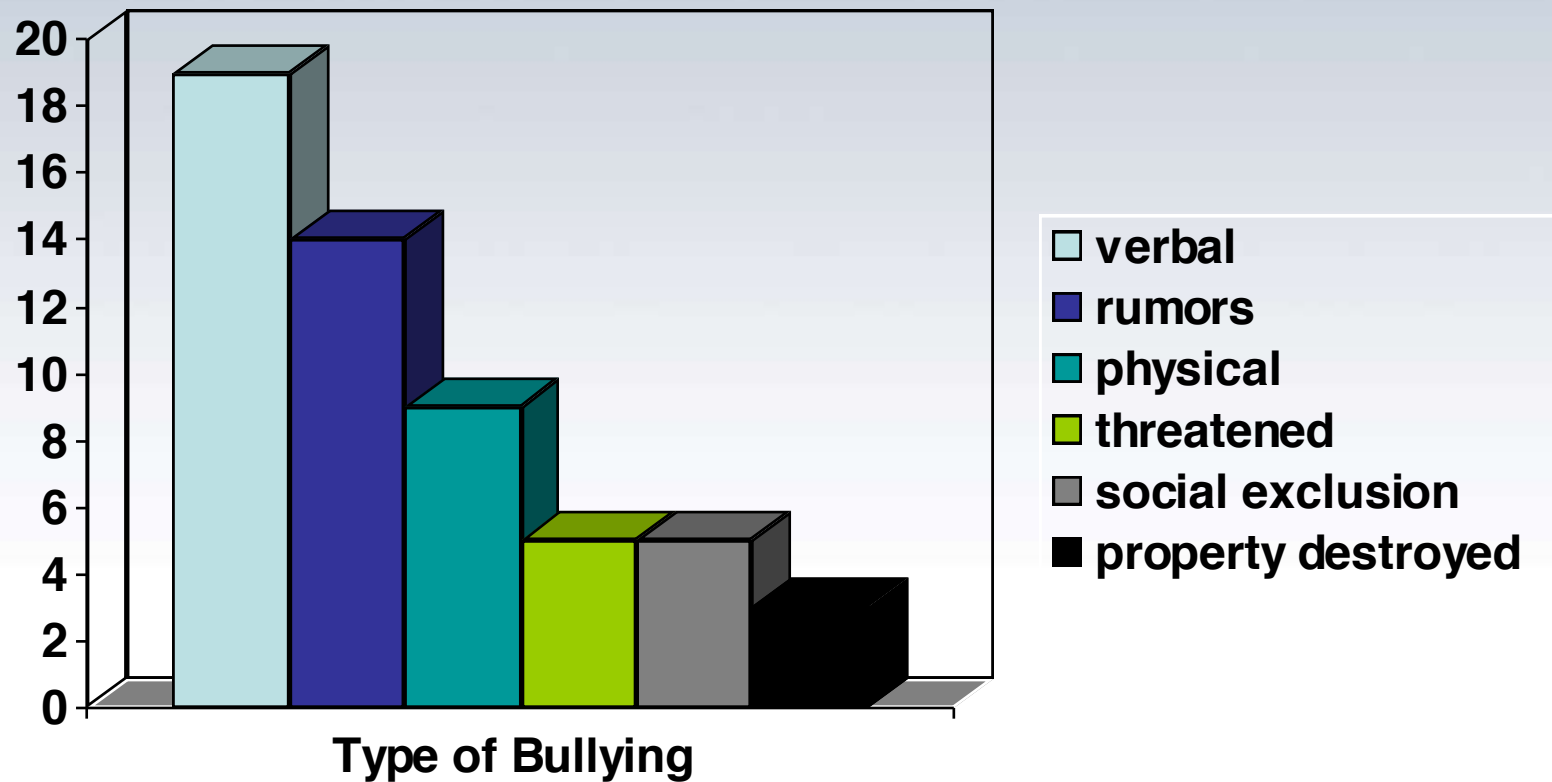
Myth: Bullying is the same as conflict.



Reality: Any two people can have a conflict. Bullying only occurs where there is a power imbalance.



Type of Bullying Experienced (NCVS 2005)



Key Findings About Bullying

1. Many children are involved in bullying situations, and most are quite concerned about it.



Prevalence of Bullying

- *Nansel et al. (2001): students in grades 6-10*
 - 19% bullied others “sometimes” or more often
 - 9% bullied others weekly
 - 17% were bullied “sometimes” or more often
 - 8% were bullied weekly
 - 6% reported bullying *and* being bullied “sometimes” or more often



Key Findings About Bullying

2. Bullying can seriously affect children who are targeted.

Myth: Bullying isn't serious—it's just a matter of "kids being kids."



Short-Term Effects of Bullying on Victims

- Lower self-esteem
- Higher anxiety and depression
- More suicidal ideation
- Higher rates of illness



Bullying, School Engagement & Academic Achievement

- Bullied children are more likely to:
 - Want to avoid going to school
 - Have higher absenteeism rates
 - Say they dislike school; receive lower grades



Key Findings About Bullying

3. Many children don't report bullying experiences to adults.



Reporting of Bullying to School Staff

- Older children and boys are less likely to report victimization.
- Why don't children report?
 - 2/3 of victims felt that staff responded poorly
 - 6% believed that staff responded very well. (Hoover et al., 1992)



Key Findings About Bullying

4. Adults are not as responsive to bullying as we should be (and as children want us to be)



Adults' Responsiveness to Bullying

- Adults overestimate their effectiveness in identifying bullying and intervening.
 - 70% of teachers believed that adults intervene almost all the time
 - 25% of students agreed (Charach et al., 1995)



Students' Perceptions of Adults Actions

- Among 9th grade students (Harris et al., 2002):
 - 35% believed their teachers were interested in trying to stop bullying (25% for administrators)
 - 44% did not know if their teachers were interested
 - 21% felt teachers were NOT interested

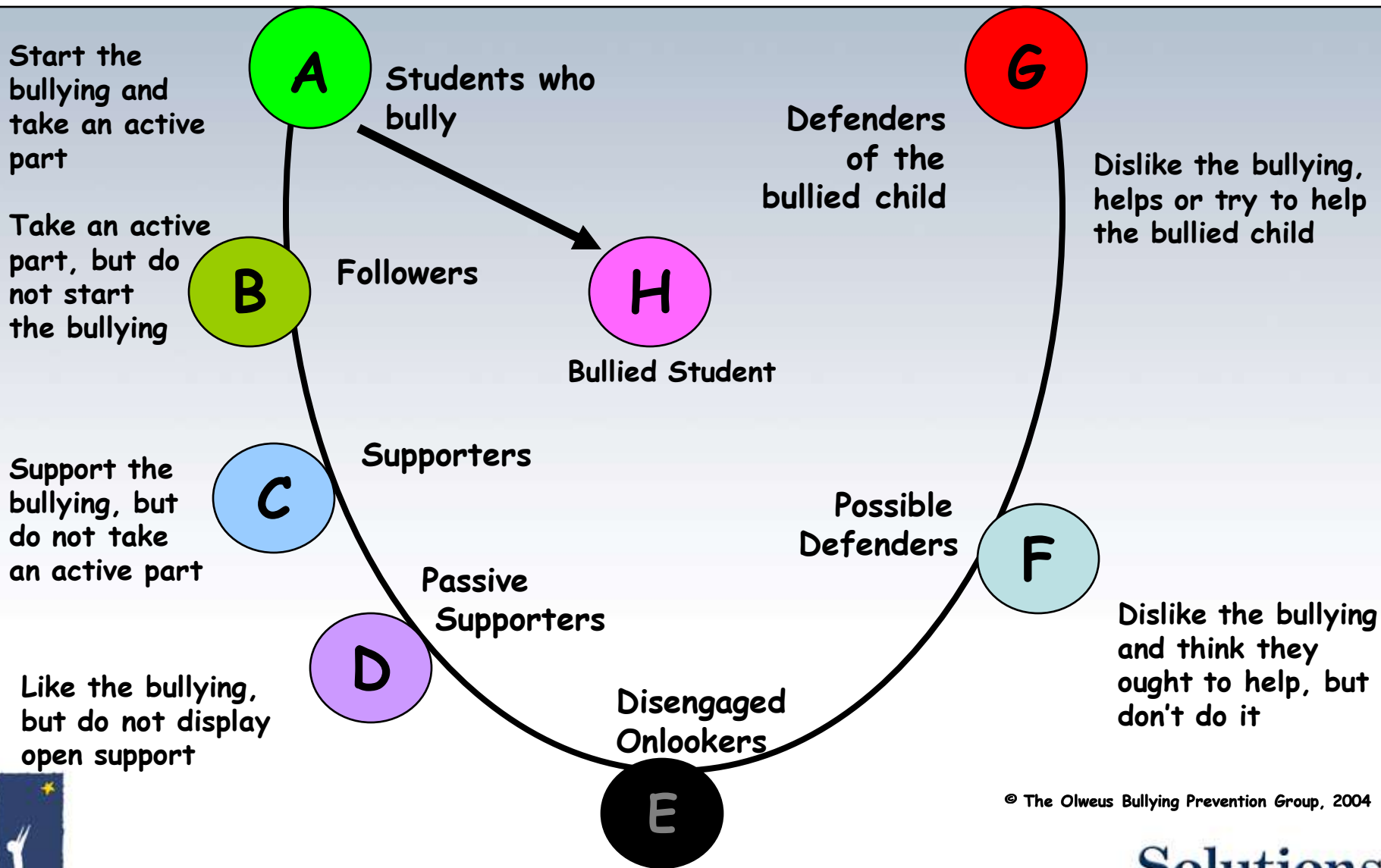


Key Findings About Bullying

5. Bullying is best understood as a group phenomenon in which children may play a variety of roles.



The Bullying Circle: Students' Reactions/Roles in a Bullying Situation (Olweus)



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Peer Attitudes Toward Bullying

- Most children have sympathy for bullied children.
 - 80% of middle school students “felt sorry” for victims of bullying (Unnever & Cornell, 2003)
- But, sympathy does not always translate into action.
 - 64% said that other students try to prevent bullying only “once in a while” or “never.”



What Are Schools Doing To Address Bullying?

- Nothing
- Awareness-raising efforts
- Reporting, tracking
- Zero tolerance (student exclusion)
- Social skills training for victims of bullying
- Individual & group treatment for children who bully/children who are bullied
- Mediation, conflict resolution programs
- Curricular approaches to bullying prevention
- **Comprehensive approaches**

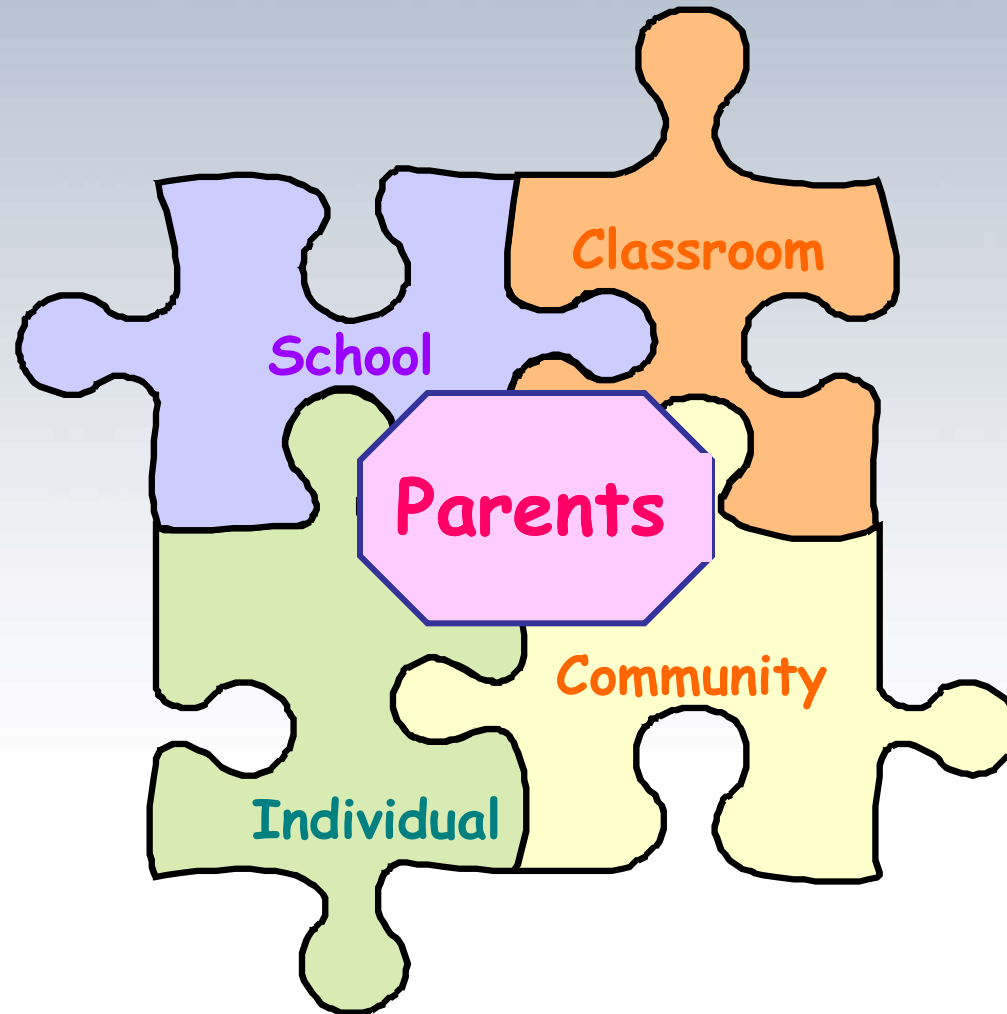




OLWEUS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM



Program Components



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The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program IS...

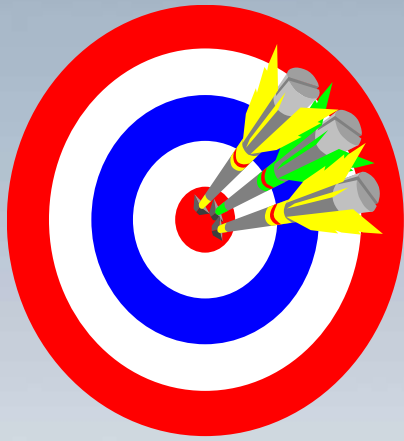
- Designed for ALL students
- Preventive AND responsive
- Focused on changing norms and restructuring the school setting
- Research-based
- NOT time-limited: Requires systematic efforts over time



The OBPP IS NOT...

- a **curriculum**
- a **conflict resolution** approach
- a **peer mediation** program
- an **anger management** program





Goals of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

- Reduce existing bullying problems among students
- Prevent the development of new bullying problems
- Achieve better peer relations at school.



Program Principles

1. Warmth, positive interest, and involvement are needed on the part of adults in school.
2. Set firm limits to unacceptable behavior.
3. Consistently use nonphysical, nonhostile negative consequences when rules are broken.
4. Adults in the school should act as authorities and positive role models.



School-Level Components

- 1. Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee**
- 2. Conduct committee and staff trainings**
- 3. Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire**
- 4. Hold staff discussion groups**
- 5. Introduce the school rules against bullying**





school rules **about bullying**

- **We will not bully others.**
- **We will try to help students who are bullied.**
- **We will try to include students who are left out.**
- **If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.**



School-Level Components

- 6. Review and refine the school's supervisory system**
- 7. Hold a school kick-off event to launch the program**
- 8. Involve parents**



Classroom-Level Components

- Post and enforce schoolwide rules against bullying
- Hold regular class meetings
- Hold meetings with students' parents



Purposes of Class Meetings

- Teach students about bullying, rules, related issues
- Help students learn more about themselves, feelings, reactions
- Build a sense of community
- Help the teacher learn more about classroom culture
- Provide a forum for addressing and following up on bullying issues



Individual-Level Components



1. Supervise students' activities
2. Ensure that all staff intervene on-the-spot when bullying occurs
3. Hold meetings with students involved in bullying
4. Develop individual intervention plans for involved students



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Community-Level Components

- Involve community members on the BPCC
- Develop partnerships with community members to support your program
- Help spread anti-bullying messages and principles of best practice throughout the community



Recognition of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program



- Blueprint Model Program (Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence)
 - Model Program (SAMHSA)
 - Effective Program (OJJDP)
- Level 2 Program (US Dept. of Education)



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For More Information...

- About the OBPP:

www.clemson.edu/olweus

- About bullying:

www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov

